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Volume 14

April 1992

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Individuals £7.50 Sterling or £8.00 Irish Punts

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Studies" and addressed to the Editor.

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The Saving of the Centurion's Servant (Luke 7:1-10) as an Internalization of the Saving of the Widow and her Child (1 Kgs 17:1-16)

Tom Brodie.

The account of the life-giving command which healed the centurion's servant (Luke 7:1-10; Matt 8:5-13; cf. John 4:43-54) is generally attributed to Q.¹ In itself this attribution is plausible, but on closer examination there is a further explanation which is less hypothetical and ultimately more credible: Luke's text involves a systematic synthesizing and christianizing of the account of the life-giving commands which were issued to and through Elijah and which warded off the threat of death (1 Kgs 17:1-16). Thus the threat which once faced a widow and her children² has been adapted to help form the account of the threat which faced the centurion and his servant.

Of the many adaptations wrought by Luke, two are pivotal: The figure of the widow has been replaced by that of the centurion (a move which accords with the requirements of Luke's own narrative). And, most basic of all, the OT drama has been internalized. In other words, Luke has rewritten the action so that there is a far greater sense of what is happening within people. In particular, the OT picture of a relationship which is based on what is physical (mother and child) has been replaced by a relationship (centurion/master and slave) which depends for its quality not on what is physical but on factors which are internal - particularly on genuine appreciation and agapè.

There are, of course, several elements in Luke's narrative which cannot be accounted for through 1 Kgs 17:1-16; the OT text is simply one component, and Luke is also using materials which are specifically Christian. But Luke's use of that one component provides a major clue to the composition of his text.

This investigation of the relationship of Luke 7:1-10 to the Elijah-Elisha narrative means suspending the question of Luke's relationship to Matt 8:5-13 and John 4:43-54. The suspension however is temporary. Continued research into Luke's systematic use of the Elijah-Elisha narrative will ultimately have the effect not of ignoring Luke's relationship to the other gospels, nor of ignoring Q, but of setting these questions on a firmer basis. The reason for this suspension is important: Luke's relationship to the OT has a certain clarity which is missing in the inter-gospel relationships and in the invoking of Q - in the Luke-Elijah case there is no doubt about which text is older and therefore about who may be depending on whom, nor is there any major doubt about the shape of the alleged source (about the text of 1 Kgs 17:1-16) - and this clarity provides an avenue which deserves investigation.

To pursue this investigation one must (A) establish the context, and (B) compare the texts.

A. THE CONTEXT

To set Luke's use of the Elijah story in context it is necessary to take account of three basic factors: (1) Luke's general imitation of the Septuagint; (2) Luke's manifold indebtedness to the Elijah-Elisha narrative; (3) The special indebtedness of Luke 7 to the women stories of I Kings 17 and 2 Kings 4.

(1) Luke's Imitation of the LXX

It is a commonplace of NT studies that Luke is heavily indebted to the Septuagint - to its genres, narrative techniques, vocabulary and style.³

This indebtedness, this dependence, did not occur in a vacuum. Unlike modern writers, who often cultivate novelty and independence, ancient authors, including those who were gifted and original, sought to build carefully on writings which were older. Jewish writers reworked older documents, especially older biblical documents, and often adapted them radically.⁴ Hellenistic authors systematically remodelled older texts, and they described what they were doing as a process of imitation (Gk., mimesis; Lat., imitatio).⁵ Luke was involved in both worlds, Jewish and Hellenistic - in Jewish biblical literature and in hellenistic literary practices - and so it is not surprising that in using the Septuagint he should have reworked it. In fact his dependence on the Septuagint has been described precisely as a form of imitation.⁶

One of the practices of imitation was that of internalization - a process of reworking existing texts so that the focus shifted from what was external to what was internal. In some hellenistic writing, for instance, there is a change of emphasis: from what was happening among the gods to what was happening within people, and from highlighting warlike heroism to appreciating a heroism which was quieter, more within.⁷ An even stronger internalizing tendency may be found in early Christianity, particularly in Paul's move from letter to spirit, from law to faith. Thus the broad heritage both of hellenistic literature and of early Christianity provided Luke with an ample precedent for subjecting the ancient scriptures to a process of internalization.

(2) Luke's Dependence on the Elijah-Elisha Narrative

In seeking the literary background to the composition of the gospels one of the most promising texts is the Elijah-Elisha narrative. It tells of God's prophetic miracle-worker(s) and it is approximately the length of Mark's gospel.⁸ Several scholars have noted aspects of its affinity with the gospels,⁹

and R. E. Brown, for instance, concluded in 1971 that "the miracles of Elisha are...a partial analogue to the miracles of Jesus."¹⁰ Brown is unsure of the nature of the link between the gospels and the Elijah-Elisha story - he does not press the investigation - but his tentative conclusion is that the link, in some way at least, is literary: "I wonder if it was not precisely the pattern of the prophets' careers that offered the model for gospel composition...The gospel as a literary form is undoubtedly a novum, but it is not without partial precedents in the histories of the prophets of Israel."¹¹

This is the essence: not that the Elijah-Elisha narrative offered a complete model for the gospels but that it provided one crucial component.

When the investigation is pressed further one finds in the case of Luke that this partial literary link can be defined with some precision. There are at least three significant connections:

(1) The inaugural speech (Luke 4:16-30). During Jesus' inaugural speech at Nazareth, the turning-point is marked by explicit solemn references to Elijah and Elisha: "Truly, I say to you, there were many widows in the days of Elijah..." (4:25-27). The significance of these references is underlined by the fact that the speech as a whole "has a definite programmatic character."¹² In other words, Luke's very program is modelled partly on Elijah and Elisha.

(2) The two-part assumption-centered plan. The essential plan of Luke-Acts - two balancing parts centered on an assumption (Acts 1:2) - is the same as that of the Elijah-Elisha narrative. (Both use the same central verb, analambano, "take up/assume," and both use it three times [2 Kgs 2:9,10,11; Acts 1:1,11,22]).¹³ In all of ancient literature these seem to be the only documents with such a plan, and therefore Luke's affinity with the Elijah-Elisha narrative is unique.

(3) The systematic dependence of several specific passages on episodes from the Elijah-Elisha narrative. There are several Lukan passages which, when examined closely and with due attention to the modes of imitation, show direct literary dependence on specific texts from the Elijah-Elisha narrative: Luke 7:11-17; 7:36-50; 9:51-56; 9:57-62; 24:51; Acts 1:9-10; 6:9-14; 8:9-40.¹⁴ At times Luke stays close to the length of the LXX passages (cf. Luke 7:11-17 and I Kgs 17:17-24) but quite often he compresses the older text, omitting a mass of detail and distilling the essence (e.g. Luke 9:51-56 distills 2 Kgs 1:1-2:6; and Luke 9:57-62 distills I Kings 19). In all cases Luke subjects the LXX text to a process which, among other things, involves modernization, Christianization, and adaptation to the requirements of his own narrative.

(3) Luke 7 and the Women Stories (1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 4)

Within the Elijah-Elisha narrative there are two sets of women stories

which in various ways balance and complement one another. The opening set (1 Kings 17) tells first of a widow who was threatened by death (her own and her children's, 17:7-16), and then of the widow's son actually dying (17:17-24). The later set (2 Kgs 4:1-37) tells first of a widow who, along with her children, faced another threat (4:1-7), and then of a woman whose son was born and died (4:8-37). Despite the many differences between them, the two sets of stories are inherently connected.¹⁵

What is important in the present investigation is that both these sets of stories have been used, at least partly, in the women-related stories of Luke 7 - in the raising of the widow's son (7:11-17; cf. 1 Kgs 17:17-24) and in the account of the woman who was forgiven (7:36-50; cf. 2 Kgs 4:1-37).

The present article seeks to complete the picture - to show that the one part which has yet to be accounted for, the opening story of the widow who was threatened by death (1 Kgs 17:1-16), has in fact also been used in Luke 7, namely in the opening story of the centurion's servant (Luke 7:1-10). The relationship between the texts is outlined on the following facing pages 58 and 59.

Luke's internalization of the story of the widow and her child is not a unique phenomenon. Essentially the same process is found in his reworking of the later mother-and-child story (1 Kgs 4:8-37): in place of the account of a woman who gives birth to physical life (to a child), Luke tells of a woman who found a new life which was internal, the new life of forgiveness and faith (Luke 7:36-50).¹⁶ Thus the internalizing of mother-and-child stories is found twice in Luke 7, at its beginning and at its conclusion.

To answer the question of whether Luke really did use 1 Kgs 17:7-16 it is now necessary to compare the texts more closely.

B. THE TEXTS

(1) Introductory Analysis

The OT text (1 Kgs 17:1-16) occurs at the very beginning of the Elijah-Elisha narrative and it consists of two scenes - first, a brief account of how God's commanding word controlled all the forces of life and death (controlled the sending of Elijah ["Go'...And he did so"] and controlled even the ravens so that they sustained Elijah's life, 17:1-7); and then a longer description of how God's commanding word not only sustained Elijah but also averted the imminent death of a widow and her children (17:8-16). Of these two scenes, the first, concerning the all-commanding word, is introductory or illustrative;

The Balancing Women-related Stories of 1 Kings 17 and 2 Kings 4:1-37
and Their Relationship to the Opening and Closing Episodes of Luke 7

1 Kings 17

17:1-7

17:8-16

17:17-24

God's words:	<u>Mother-Child</u>	Raising
command &	God's command	the
compliance	gives life - esp.	widow's
(a short	to the threatened	son
scene)	foreign widow	
	and her children	



Luke 7:1-10



7:11-17

2 Kings 4

4:1-7

4:8-37

Overcoming	<u>Mother-Child</u>
indebted-	Finding
ness (a	new life
short	(a longer
story)	story)



7:36-50

Jesus' command gives	Raising
life to the foreign	the
officer's servant	widow's
(a story, with a short	son
illustration about	
command & compliance)	

Overcoming indebtedness
and finding new life
(a long story, with a
short parable about
indebtedness)

[= Mother-Child story
transformed, esp. by
internalization]

[= Mother-Child story
transformed, esp. by
internalization]

The Prophet's Word Commands Life, Wards Off Death (1 Kgs 17:1-16; Lk 7:1-10)

1	Subsidiary scene (1 Kgs 17:1-7): God's word commands all of life, and <u>sends</u> Elijah forth	
2	The word comes to Elijah, and <u>sends</u> him to Sarepta. (17:8-9a)	When he had completed his words... he went to Capernaum. (Luke 7:1)
3	The foreign widow will care for Israel's prophet (17:9b) [She & children, about to die, 17:12]	The foreign officer whose servant is about to die, loves the Jewish people. (7:2,5)
4	Meeting the widow at the gate.(17:10a)	[Meeting a widow at a gate. (7:11-12)]
5	Requests for sustenance:(17:10b-11,13) * Elijah <u>calls</u> the widow for water; * Elijah <u>calls</u> the widow for bread; (pause, v 12) * Elijah asks the widow for cake; - the prophet's word commands many <u>goings, comings, doings</u> .	Requests for life: (7:3-4,6a) * The officer <u>sends</u> the elders. * The elders ask Jesus to go. (pause, v 5) * The officer <u>sends</u> friends.
6	[The widow recalls her sins. 17:18]	The officer's unworthiness. (7:6b-7)
		Subsidiary scene: the word commands life completely - <u>"Go...Come...Do..."</u> (7:8; cf. 7b)
7	Solemn pronouncement [about God]: The Lord's word assures life.(17:14)	Solemn pronouncement [about response to God]: See this faith. (7:9)
8	The prophetic word fulfilled: the food lasts, the widow & children live.(15-16)	Jesus' word fulfilled: they find the servant well. (7:10)

and the emphasis falls on the second, longer, story - concerning the threatened widow and her children.

The NT text (Luke 7:1-10) occurs at the beginning of one of Luke's distinctive chapters (chap. 7) - the chapter which "is thematically so closely related to the [inaugural] Nazareth pericope."¹⁷ Thus it has a certain leading role. And it tells how the word of Jesus turned away the imminent death of the centurion's servant. Contained within the NT account there is a very brief scene which is both subsidiary and illustrative - that of the commanding process within the army (Luke 7:7b,8).

The essence of both accounts is that the Lord's word has complete command over life and death. Even when death is imminent, the commanding word can turn it away.

But Luke has made several adaptations. First, concerning the characters. Unlike the OT, where there is a clear distinction between the Lord and the prophet, Jesus combines roles; in Luke 7 he is both Lord and prophet (7:6,16,29). Luke has thereby Christianized the text; he has allowed the developing Christology of the NT era, including his own Christology, to shape his reworking of the older story.

The character of the foreign widow has also been changed; it has given way to that of the foreign officer. The larger reality which governs this change is not so much that of Christology as the requirements of Luke's own narrative - specifically the pattern of widow-officer complementarity which was begun implicitly in the inaugural speech (cf. the widow and [the commanding officer] Naaman, Luke 4:25-27), and which is developed more clearly in the later figures of Tabitha and Cornelius (Acts 9:36-chap. 10; Tabitha is associated with several widows, and Cornelius was a centurion).¹⁸ Why Luke established this widow-officer pattern is difficult to say - one could debate the historical and theological reasons - but once it was set up it helped to govern other factors, including the way in which the characters in the older scriptures were reinterpreted.

Luke's next adaptation in the characters - from child(ren) to servant (doulos, NT) - is basic to his entire procedure. As already partly indicated, it is one of the primary elements in a larger process of internalization, a process which moves the focus away from externals, from the physical (including physical relationships, even of parent and child) to the internal. The OT relationship is physical, based on parenthood; the NT relationship, however, is based on something more internal, on the fact that, to the centurion, the servant is entimos, "dear," or "highly valued" - a word which in the context, particularly the context of the centurion's love (verb, agapao) for the Jews (7:5), indicates a bond that, in some way at least, is spiritual or internal.

Incidentally, this change - from child(ren) to servant - would seem to be connected with some subsequent confusion in the gospel tradition. In the Hebrew original there is only one child, a son, and in Luke the servant is referred to at one point (7:7) as a boy, pais, meaning either "servant" or "child" - a form which may be read as essentially the same as the Hebrew. Matthew highlights the word pais, using it three times, 8:5,8,13, and he omits doulos altogether. John is clearer still: though he uses pais once, 4:51, he surrounds it with words (paidion, "[small] child," 4:49; huios, "son," 4:46,47,49,53) which indicate unambiguously that the pais is indeed a son.

The process of internalization which is applied to the parent-child relationship is applied also to other aspects of the OT story. Luke has so rewritten the text that one gets a far better sense of what is going on within the various characters.

As well as adapting the characters and employing internalization, Luke has also used other procedures, particularly that of fusion or conflation. One instance of fusion was already noted - the fact that, within Luke 7, Jesus is both Lord and prophet. A further instance is his integrating of the introductory illustrative scene (concerning the all-controlling word, 1 Kgs 17:1-7) into the main story: in Luke's version the illustrative scene alludes to the army (7:7b,8), but, while it has essentially the same illustrative function as the introductory scene in the Elijah story, it has become an inherent part of the larger story.

A similar procedure of fusion is found in Luke's rewriting of the two distinct stories which occur in 2 Kgs 4:1-37 (cf. Luke 7:36-50): he fuses the two accounts into one, radically synthesizing the first, introductory, narrative so that it falls within the larger pattern of the second. (The initial story concerning indebtedness, 2 Kgs 4:1-7, has been absorbed into the larger story concerning finding new life, Luke 7:36-50; cf. 2 Kgs 4:8-37. The introductory story forms a basis for the parable concerning indebtedness, Luke 7:41-43).¹⁹

The fact that Luke's illustrative scene is drawn from the army (rather than the sending of Elijah and the ravens, etc.) may be explained in part by the requirements of his narrative - by the inclusion, at the beginning of his account, of an army officer. More on this later.

A further aspect of Luke's procedure is his striving for vivid communication. This encompasses a number of techniques, including the effort to compose a text which is concise, clear and explicit. He pursues this aim of vividness elsewhere - for example, in rewriting the account of the raising of the widow's son (7:11-17; cf. 1 Kgs 17:17-24)²⁰ - and essentially the same procedure may be found for instance in the historical writings of Livy.²¹

(2) Detailed analysis

The accompanying outline of the texts (on the facing pages) sometimes simplifies the relationship between the texts, and it does so particularly in section 5, but it provides an initial guide. The following analysis looks at the texts more closely, taking them section by section.

Generally Luke stays close to the order and content of the main OT story (17:1-6), but two small sections have been criss-crossed with the following stories: the meeting with the widow at the gate (1 Kgs 17:10a) has been used in the NT story of raising the widow's son (at Nain, Luke 7:11-12); and part of the OT story about raising the widow's son - the reference to the widow's sinfulness (1 Kgs 17:18) - has been used in describing the centurion (his unworthiness, 7:6b-7).

1. The commanding word: The Lord's word commands life completely (two subsidiary, illustrative, scenes, 1 Kgs 17:1-7; Luke 7:8; cf. Luke 7:7b)

While the larger texts (1 Kings 17:1-16; Luke 7:1-10) are primarily concerned with the encounter between the prophet and the foreigner who is threatened by death, both contain a subsidiary scene which is quite distinct - one about an obedience which involves even the ravens (at God's command the ravens feed Elijah), and the other about the obedience which operates in the army (Luke 7:8). The essential point of both these distinctive scenes is to illustrate, graphically, the idea of obedience, but - as indicated earlier - while Luke maintains the central idea of the older text he adapts it to the requirements of his own narrative, in this case the requirements posed by the figure of an army officer. Thus the scene with the ravens gives way to an army scene.

But there is a further reason why the image of the army is so suitable. As the research of Jerome T. Walsh has indicated, one of the pervasive structures of the OT text (1 Kgs 17:1-16) is that of "command and compliance,"²² and within day-to-day human experience one could scarcely find a better illustration of the dynamic of command and compliance than in the picture of a master/centurion giving orders. Three times (in vv 2-6; 9-10a; and 13-16) the OT passage uses a "structure wherein a command or the like is given with a description of its execution following in similar words."²³ And, in compact form, that is exactly what one finds in Luke. Three times there is an account of a command, and each time the execution repeats the essential word of the command: "'Go,' and he goes....'Come,' and he comes....'Do this' and he does it." In other words, Luke has taken the essence of the opening, illustrative, episode - its command-compliance element - and, while synthesizing it with subsequent instances of command and compliance, has

integrated it into the flow of his narrative.

In formulating this brief scene, Luke has maintained several verbal echoes of the older text, both of the opening scene with the ravens and also of the larger OT picture of various goings, and comings and doings:

OT: wv 3,5 πορεύου...καὶ ἐποιήσεν
 8,10 πορεύου ...καὶ ἐπορεύθη
 13 εἰσελθε καὶ ποιήσον κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου,
 ὁλὰ ποιήσον ἐμὸ
 15 καὶ ἐπορεύθη...καὶ ἐποιήσεν

NT: 7b ...σὲ εἰσελθεῖν, ὁλὰ εἰπε λόγῳ
 8 πορεύθητι καὶ πορεύεται
 ἔρχου καὶ ἔρχεται
 ποιήσον... καὶ ποιεῖ

OT: wv 3,5 Go...And he did
 8,10 ...go...and he went
 13 ...go in and do according to your word, but do/make me
 15 And [she]...went and she did

NT: 7b ...should come/go to me; but say the word
 8 Go and he goes...
 Come and he comes...
 Do this and he does it

Some of the similarities suggest an element of word-play,²⁴ but the essence of the similarity indicates a straightforward process of vividly summarizing and adapting.

2. From the word(s) to the foreign/border city (2 Kgs 17:8-9a; Luke 7:1)

In both texts the main stories begin by speaking of the word(s), rema(ta), and of a move to a town which is in some way foreign - the foreign city of Sarepta, and the border town of Capernaum. In the OT the word of the Lord is the cause of Elijah's going, whereas with Jesus the speaking of the words appears to be more the occasion of his going. (Since Jesus is himself the Lord, his relationship to the word is necessarily different from that of Elijah. The words are described as "his words").

The fact that Jesus' words are set "in the hearing of the people" accords both with the preceding context and with Luke's general strategy of emphasizing the relationship of Jesus' episodes to larger audiences (see, for

instance, the references to crowds in 7:9.11).

3. The threatened foreigner (widow/officer) who cares for Israel (for Israel's prophet, 1 Kgs 17:9b,12; for the Jewish people, Luke 7:2,5)

As already indicated in the introductory analysis, the replacement of a foreign widow by a foreign officer brings Luke 7:1-17 into line with Luke's

broader pattern of widow-officer complementarity (cf. Luke 4:25-27; Acts 9:36-chap 10).

The OT image of nourishing the Israelite prophet gives way to that of loving the Jewish nation and building a synagogue - an adaptation which in its explicitness ("loving") and vividness (building a synagogue) corresponds to the way Luke adapts other texts. The emphasis on loving (agapao), insofar as it spells out what is happening within the centurion, also adds an important element of internalization.

Even though the centurion is not himself threatened by death (as is the widow), neither is he free from the death threat. What Luke has done is shift the focus somewhat from the physical death which threatens the child(ren)/servant to the inner impact which the situation is having on the centurion. He may not be in danger himself, and the threatened person may not be his child, yet to him that person is dear, valued highly, and therefore he is effected, but interiorly.

4. Meeting the widow at the gate (1 Kgs 17:10a; Luke 11-12)

Luke has adapted the meeting to suit the situation of the widow at Nain, and to include the presence of many onlookers, yet he has stayed close to the OT text:

καὶ...ἐπορεύθη εἰς Σάρεπτα

εἰς τὸν πυλῶνα τῆς πόλεως

καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐκεῖ γυνὴ χήρα

Καὶ...ἐπορεύθη εἰς

πόλιν καλουμένην Ναϊν

ὡς δὲ ἤγγισεν τῇ πύλῃ
τῆς πόλεως

καὶ ἰδοὺ...ὁ υἱὸς...καὶ
αὐτὴ ἦν χήρα

And...he went to Sarepta, And...he went to a city called Nain...
to a gate of the city, As he neared the gate of the city,

and behold there a widow woman behold...the son...and she was a widow

5. Sending people to bring sustenance/life (1 Kgs 17:10b-11,13; Luke 7:3-4,6a; cf 1 Kgs 17:2,9)

Three times Elijah asks the widow for sustenance, twice in a rather

commanding way (he shouts after her, 17:10b-11), and once in an insistent plea (17:13). And three times Luke portrays a process of asking for life, twice by sending people (the centurion first sends elders and then friends, 7:3,6a), and once by pleading strongly (the elders press Jesus to go, 7:4).

Luke's rewriting involves several changes, among them expressing the sending in a form that is explicit, and placing the sendings so that they balance one another (in first and third place, rather than first and second as in the OT). (A similar balance between first and third occurs, for instance, in Luke 9:57-62 - between "I will follow you..." in 9:57 and 9:61).

In depicting a double sending, Luke apparently depends not only on Elijah's double cry or call to the woman (17:10,11) but also on God's double sending of Elijah ("Go from here...Go to...", 17:3,8). Thus he has fused together, in explicit form, elements which in the OT are scattered and less clear:

1 Kings 17: "Go from here...[to receive the sustenance of life]."

"Go to...[receive the sustenance of life]."

"He called to her ...[for the sustenance of life]."

"He called to her [again...for the sustenance of life]."

Luke 7: "He sent elders...[to request the saving of life]."

"He sent friends...[to adapt the request for life]."

Luke's procedure here appears somewhat like that which he employs when reworking the actions of the woman of Shunem (2 Kgs 4:8-37): the varied actions of the woman and her child are synthesized into into a more compact action by the sinful woman (Luke 7:38).²⁵ The present case is not as strong linguistically, but it seems to accord with Luke's practice.

Unlike the Elijah story, where the various implicit sendings originate either with God or the prophet, Luke shows the sendings as coming from the centurion - a move which, like so many others, places a greater focus on what is happening within ordinary people, particularly within the centurion. Unlike the encounter between Elijah and the widow, where it is extremely difficult to sense the inner and interpersonal dynamics, Luke's interactions are more explicit: the centurion has a high regard for the Jews, for the elders, and for Jesus and the servant; the elders have a high regard for the centurion and they trust Jesus; and the centurion sends "friends" - a word which highlights a world of the inner and interpersonal.

6. The foreigner recalls sinfulness (1 Kgs 17:18; Luke 7:6b-7)

When (in the subsequent story) the widow addresses the prophet who has come to her, she speaks of her sinfulness. And as Jesus is coming to the centurion, he speaks of his unworthiness:

καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς Ἡλαιοῦ
Τί ἐμὲ καὶ σοί,
ὁ ἄνθρωπος τοῦ θεοῦ; -
εἰσηλθες πρὸς μέ
τοῦ ἀναμνησάσαι ἀδικίας μου
καὶ θανατῶσαι τὸν υἱόν μου;

...λέγων αὐτῷ
Κύριε,
μὴ σκύλλου,
οὐ γὰρ ἱκανός εἰμι
ἵνα ὑπὸ τῇν στέγην μου
εἰσέλθῃς,
...καὶ ἰαθῇτω ὁ παῖς μου.

She said to Elijah,
What have you with me,
man of God?
Have you come in to me
to recall my sins
and to kill my son?

...saying to him,
Lord,
do not trouble yourself;
for I am not worthy
that you come in under my roof;
...and my boy shall be healed.

Luke's rewriting involves several adaptations. The obscure "What have you with me?" (Ti emoi kai soi;) has been replaced by something simpler. "Man of God" has given way to a title which intensifies the idea of the connection with God. The reference to the roof adds a touch of vividness. And in place of the OT references to sin and death, Luke gives a rendering which, as so often in his gospel, lays the emphasis on the positive.

7. The solemn pronouncements - about the Lord's life-giving word (1 Kgs 17:14), and about the response of faith to that word (Luke 7:9)

Elijah pronounces the word of the Lord - a promise to give the sustenance of life. Jesus also makes a pronouncement - about the faith of the centurion in the granting of life. Apparently what Luke has done, rather than reproduce the promise, is to show the other side of the coin, the response of faith. Thus once again (as in the case of the sending) he has shifted the emphasis from the action of God to the corresponding reality within the centurion. It is part of his larger strategy of developing the older text, and particularly of portraying what is happening within people - in this case the working of a faith which is extraordinary.

8. The word is fulfilled, thus bringing continued life (1 Kgs 17:15-16: Luke 7:10)

In the OT the sustenance of life is maintained - thus enabling the widow and her children to eat and presumably to stay alive. And in Luke those who return to the house find that the servant is healthy. Despite its brevity, Luke's text manages, as often, to be more vivid (the house) and explicit (healthy).

Conclusion

In the preceding analysis some of the links between the texts are obvious and strong; others are weak and more debatable. When assessing such evidence it is important not to insist on what is weak. Insistence on what is weak, whether by the person presenting the evidence or by someone who is questioning it, obscures the main issue: Is there evidence which is strong, strong enough to indicate that Luke has reworked 1 Kgs 17:1-16?

It appears that there is. The following factors are particularly important.

(1) The broad context of Jewish and Hellenistic rewriting. To say that Luke's text is dependent on a text which is older is not to claim something unique. Rather it is to place Luke within the literary world of his day, a world in which the interconnectedness of texts was a commonplace.

(2) The immediate context of Luke's use of the LXX. Luke's kinship with the LXX is not a matter of dispute. It was his Scripture, and in seeking to understand and portray how Jesus fulfilled that Scripture, Luke drew on it deeply.

(3) Luke's unique affinity with the Elijah-Elisha narrative, especially in chap. 7. Luke's affinity with the Elijah-Elisha narrative is such - in the inaugural Nazareth speech, in the overall plan of Luke-Acts, and in the detailed similarities of several passages, especially in chap. 7 - that there is nothing surprising in the basic idea that Luke 7:1-10 reworks 1 Kgs 17:1-16. (The likelihood of a connection between these specific texts is heightened by the fact that, in varying degrees, both are leading texts. Luke 7:1-10 inaugurates a leading Lukan block, and 1 Kgs 17:1-16 inaugurates the Elijah-Elisha narrative).

(4) The persistence of similarities. In every section and at diverse levels - theme, order, details - there are persistent similarities, similarities which go well beyond the range of coincidence.

(5) The understandability of the differences. The differences are such, that even though they are great, they are not a confused jumble. Rather, they show a certain coherence, and as such they can be understood within the context of imitative rewriting, particularly within the context of some of Luke's most basic processes of adapting other texts - modernization, Christianization, clarification (including vividness and explicitness), fusion, adaptation to the broader requirements of his own narrative, and, above all, internalization.

In a sense the conclusion is simple: Luke, an acknowledged littérateur, employed a literary method.

It is tempting now to return immediately to the question of the relationship of Luke's text (7:1-10) to the similar accounts in Matthew (8:5-13) and John (4:43-54) and to ask whether, if Luke really is based on 1 Kings, one

can explain satisfactorily the relationships between the three gospel narratives. This task must indeed be faced - but not yet. If undertaken now such an investigation would become lost in a larger unresolved discussion about gospel relationships in general. It is better for the moment to continue the slow process of unravelling Luke's relationship to the OT, for the more that is known about that, the better will be the foundation for eventually discussing Luke's relationship to the other gospels.

What can be concluded, however, is that it is no longer possible, without further ado, to attribute Luke 7:1-10 to Q. It is not reasonable to invoke an unknown document and at the same time to bypass a source which, on the basis of multiple evidence, was known to Luke and was imitated by him.

Notes

- 1 See, for instance, H. Schürmann, Das Lukasevangelium, 1:1-9:50 (HTKNT III, I; Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1969) 396; I. H. Marshall, The Gospel of Luke (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 277-278; J. A. Fitzmyer, The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, AB 28, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981, 648-649; U. Wegner, Der Hauptmann von Kafarnaum (Mt 7,28a; 8,5-10.13 par Lk 7,1-10): Ein Beitrag zur Q-Forschung. Dissertation, Tübingen, Evangelisch-theologische Fakultät, 1982/83; J. S. Kloppenborg, The Formation of Q. Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections (Studies in Antiquity & Christianity; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 117-121; F. Bovon, Das Evangelium nach Lukas (1:1-9:50) (EKKNT III/I; Zürich: Benziger - Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1989) 346-347.
- 2 The LXX uses the plural "children." The Septuagint text used in this article is that of the critical Cambridge edition (1930).
- 3 See, for instance, M. Hengel, Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980) 30-32; W. S. Kurz, "Luke-Acts and Historiography in the Greek Bible," SBL Seminar Papers, 1980 (ed. P. J. Achtemeier; Chico: Scholars, 1980) 283-300; E. Haenchen, The Acts of the Apostles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971) 72-77; Fitzmyer, Luke, 113-118.
- 4 In analyzing certain Jewish writings G. Vermes (Scripture and Tradition in Judaism [Leiden: Brill, 1961] 76-126) has spoken of "the rewritten Bible." D. Harrington ("Palestinian Adaptations of Biblical narratives and Prophecies. 1. The Bible Rewritten [Narratives]," Early

Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters [eds. R. A. Kraft & G. W. E. Nickelsburg; Atlanta: Scholars, 1986, 242-243, 247]) while allowing the phrase "rewritten Bible", emphasizes the need to respect the individuality of each process of rewriting. And M. Fishbane (Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel [New York: Oxford, 1985] has begun to uncover the fact that the biblical writers themselves, in reworking earlier biblical texts, employed a "vast store of hermeneutical techniques" (ibid, 14).

5 For a survey of the relevant classical texts, see T. M. Greene, The Light in Troy. Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry (Yale University: New Haven - London, 1982) 54-80. For a general introduction to imitation, see T. L. Brodie, "Greco-Roman Imitation of Texts as a Partial Guide to Luke's Use of Sources," Luke-Acts. New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature (ed. C. H. Talbert; Crossroad: New York, 1984) 17-46.

6 E. Plümacher, Lukas als hellenistischer Schriftsteller (SUNT 9; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971) 38-72, esp. 63-64; F. L. Horton, "Reflections on the Semitisms of Luke-Acts," Perspectives on Luke-Acts (ed. C. H. Talbert; Danville, VA: Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, 1978) 1-23, esp. 17-18.

7 In order to save space it has seemed better, when discussing imitation and internalization, not to reproduce material which is readily available elsewhere. For examples of the process of internalization and for further details about it, see G. Gusdorf, Les Sciences Humaines et la Pensée Occidentale, II: Les Origines des Sciences Humaines (Paris: Payot, 1967) 24-33; E. A. Havelock, The Greek Concept of Justice. From Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1978) esp. 137, 307; T. L. Brodie, "Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization of 2 Kings 4,1-37: A Study in Luke's Use of Rhetorical Imitation" Bib 64 (1983) 457-485, esp. 463-464.

8 The death of Elisha is recounted in 2 Kings 13, but the main body of the Elijah-Elisha narrative consists of 1 Kings 17 - 2 Kings 8:15, a text of almost fourteen chapters.

9 See esp. G. Hartmann, Der Aufbau des Markusevangeliums, NTAbh 17, #2-3, Münster: Aschendorff, 1936; M.-E. Boismard, "Elie dans le Nouveau Testament," Elie le prophète, I: Selon les Ecritures et les traditions chrétiennes (Etudes Carmélitaines; Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1956) 116-128; B. Lindars, "Elijah, Elisha and the Gospel Miracles," Miracles (ed. C. F. D. Moule; London: Bowbray, and New York: Morehouse-Barlow, 1965) 63-79; J. D. Dubois, "La Figure

- d'Elie dans la Perspective Lucanienne," RHPR 53 (1973) 155-176.
In recent years the idea of a fundamental link between Mark and the Elijah-Elisha narrative has received fresh impetus from W. Roth's, Hebrew Gospel. Cracking the Code of Mark, Chicago: Meyer-Stone, 1988.
- 10 R. E. Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," Perspective 12 (1971) 95-104, esp. 98.
- 11 Ibid., 99.
- 12 Fitzmyer, Luke, 529.
- 13 For further details on this affinity, see T. L. Brodie "Luke-Acts As an Imitation and Emulation of the Elijah-Elisha Narrative," New Views on Luke and Acts (ed. E. Richard; Glazier Books; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1990) 78-85, esp. 82-84.
- 14 See, by T. L. Brodie, "Towards Unravelling Luke's Use of the Old Testament: Luke 7.11-17 as an Imitatio of I Kings 17:17-24," NTS 32 (1986) 247-267; "Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization of 2 Kings 4,1-37: A Study in Luke's Use of Rhetorical Imitation," Bib 64 (1983) 457-485; "The Departure for Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-56) as a Rhetorical Imitation of Elijah's Departure for the Jordan (2 Kgs 1,1-2,6)," Bib 70 (1989) 96-109; "Luke 9:57-62: A Systematic Adaptation of the Divine Challenge to Elijah (1 Kings 19)," SBL Seminar Papers 1989 (ed. D. J. Lull; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989) 237-245; "Luke-Acts [esp. Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9-10] as an Imitation and Emulation of the Elijah-Elisha Narrative," New Views on Luke and Acts (ed. E. Richard; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1990) 78-85; "The Accusing and Stoning of Naboth (1 Kgs 21:8-13) as One Component of the Stephen Text (Acts 6:9-14; 7:58a)," CBQ 45 (1983) 417-432; "Towards Unraveling the Rhetorical Imitation of Sources in Acts: 2 Kgs 5 as One Component of Acts 8,9-40," Bib 67 (1986) 41-67.
- 15 Explanations for the connnection vary. R. Kilian, "Die Totenerweckungen Elias und Elisab - eine Motivwanderung," BZ 10 (1966) 44-56, invokes a complex interacting of traditions. P. Ellis, on the other hand, notes that some authors attribute the connection to some form of literary dependence ("1-2 Kings," JBC 10:40).
- 16 Brodie, "Luke 7:36-50 as an Internalization of 2 Kings 4,1-37."
- 17 L. T. Johnson, The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts (SBLDS 39; Scholars: Missoula, Montana, 1977) 96.
- 18 In fact, as indicated by Asher Finkel (in conversation, Nov 19, 1990, in New Orleans), there is a sense in which Luke's entire gospel is framed by references to widows/women and soldiers - Anna and "some soldiers" near the beginning (in 2:36; 3:14), and, near the end,

the women of Jeusalem and the centurion (23:27-29,47).

19 Brodie, "Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization," 470-474.

20 Brodie, "Luke 7.11-17 as an Imitatio," 258, 261.

21 See P. G. Walsh, Livy. His Historical Aims and Methods (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1961) 190.

22 Walsh, The Elijah Cycle: A Synchronic Approach (Diss., Univ. of Michigan, 1982) 22. As Walsh indicates, the command structure had already been noticed by earlier scholars (Bottini and Baumgartner). Where he speaks of "command and compliance" they had spoken of "comando-esecuzione" and "Auftrag und Ausführung."

23 Ibid., 8, 21.

24 Word-play was quite common in the OT - a fact which was hardly lost on Luke. Fitzmyer (Luke, 828) sees Luke 9:51 as involving a takeoff or word-play on a Hebrew expression, and there are other instances in which Luke appears to play with the wording of the LXX (e.g., see Brodie, "Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization," 473; "Acts 8:9-40," 61).

25 Brodie, "Luke 7:36-50 as an Internalization," 477.

Thomas L. Brodie, an Irish Dominican, has taught scripture at the Regional Seminary in Tunapuna, Trinidad, W.I. and in the United States, especially at Aquinas Institute of Theology, St. Louis.

In this paper I wish to look at a recent aspect of interpretation in relation to culture. I do not wish to use the word "interpretation" in relation to any specific hermeneutical or other model. Rather I wish to look at a factor which is of very great importance in relation to the understanding and appropriation of the Christ Event, and indeed in relation to the appropriation of the entire Biblical witness, in many parts of the world. I have been involved in research in this area for a number of years, most recently in January 1992. What I wish to look at is this: that in fact in many parts of the world there is a central event or a series of central events associated with the appropriation of the Christ Event in a particular culture, whether that culture is related to an entire nation or whether it is related specifically to one particular tribal grouping in that nation; and, moreover, that that event largely controls the way in which all subsequent interpretations of the Old and New Testaments are understood and received. If there is a lack of appreciation of the centrality of these events, then the entire hermeneutical and wider interpretation process is without significance.

Throughout this paper "culture" denotes the total pattern of social life including religion rather than the artistic as distinct from other activities, such as those of politics, trade or religion. The term is thus used as it is used by social anthropologists rather than as it is used by historians of the arts.

Throughout this paper too "the Gospel" is used in the Bultmannian-type sense of "the Christ Event" or "the Christ Event for us" or "the Christ Event for them" and so on. "The Christian message" or "gospels" are used for the written and oral traditions.

I wish therefore in this paper to do three things. First, I wish to look at the events which were of significance in the first major interweaving of Christianity and culture. That is, I wish to look at the issue of "Theologia in Loco" in its first major long-term presentation. Second, I wish to look at certain aspects of a modern "representation" of the Christ Event in a modern "laboratory-type" situation. Third, I wish to draw some conclusions from these two in relation to Biblical interpretation.

1. "THEOLOGIA IN LOGO"

The Christ Event took place within an immediate Jewish cultural environment, surrounded by an Aramaic and Hebrew vocabulary and Semitic expectations. Yet this integrated Judaism, in its strict and official vesture, rejected Jesus of Nazareth, and later turned against Paul in his championing of freedom from the Law through Jesus Christ. In fact, the impact of the Christian message on strictly integrated Jewish culture was minimal.

On the other hand, although the events at Athens in Acts 17 show us that the initial impact into integrated Hellenistic culture was equally limited, the general penetration into Hellenistic culture in the years ahead was far more marked. Moreover, in fact from the earliest days there was already some impact, in that Hellenism was a far more loosely organized culture than Judaism, and in the mixtures of Hellenism with other cultures, particularly Hellenistic-Judaism, the Christian message found acceptance (e.g. Acts 13:13-52; 18:1-17; 28:16-28). Although, of course, there was an "Anknüpfungspunkt" - between the Christ Event and Jewish culture, in another sense there was a greater "Anknüpfungspunkt" with Graeco-roman culture. More than Judaism this latter culture was more a "culture" in the original sense of that word; that is to say, it was related to primarily agricultural societies in the sense that their deepest concerns in ordering their lives were attuned to being in harmony with nature. (See the wider concepts in Niebuhr, *passim*; see too Tillich, pp. 61-125 and cf. Troeltsch, *passim*). For this reason an Event in which were involved the elements of birth and death and resurrection, and of suffering and healing, all related to the divine, was likely to have immediate importance (Clover, pp. 33-36; 79-81). In this way, then, we can see the spread of the Gospel into the Graeco-Roman world. However, although a similar situation had existed in the traditions of the Prophets and Psalms with their dramas of destruction and re-birth, in general First and Second Century Judaism presented a very different concept of culture; in this there was no drama of the earlier type, but rather the precise following of particular divinely-inspired words which had been uttered up until the time of Ezra and the 'Men of the Great Synagogue' and thereafter had ceased in such a way (as in the first words of the *Pirqê Abôth*; see Danby; see too Pfeiffer, p. 46). Thus, for example, in relation to law, the Graeco-Roman understanding of jurisprudence was related to the natural and cyclic order, while the Law in Judaism was related more to clear and fixed divine interventions and ordinances (e.g. Aristotle, *Ars Rhetorica* I, 13, p. 1 373b.; *Testament of the XII Patriarchs*, Judah 26:1, in Charles.) It was in the natural and cyclic culture of Hellenism and its successors, rather than in the word and ordinance culture of Judaism, that the Gospel or the Christ Event eventually came about in its initial widespread manifestation. Of course, it was the Greek language in which the Christian message found its written expression (e.g. the Platonism in Hebrew 1:3; the Stoicism in Romans 1:18-32.) However, the matter was not only that, but was much deeper than that; for behind, for example, the adoption of Roman juridical concepts was not only the facilitating of communicating the import of the Christ Event but also the beginning of the transfiguration of this culture through the interworking of Christ Event concepts and the understanding of natural and cyclic order. (On this, see

Quell, 1964, and Schrenk, 1964, where δικαιοσύνη (cf. the goddess Δίκη) is seen as part of the natural order, e.g. Plato, *Res Publica*, IV, 433c. ff.) This interworking of the Gospel and the "culture of nature" has been a dominant strand in the expansion of the Church. For many centuries the Church continued to live in the successors of Graeco-Roman culture. From time to time its modes of expressing the Christ Event were slightly adjusted to suit changing moods, but in general Europe, where the issue was most manifest, was evangelized through the gradual (although sometimes halting) assimilation of its varying cultures into the now firmly-established Christian culture. So in Europe the transfiguration of agricultural society meant that the Gospel has both totally interwoven into the fabric of the culture and also itself moulded and directed the cyclic and nature-related impulses of the culture. Wholeness, harmony, rhythm and ritual (in water or around a thanksgiving meal) were also both the medium and the message.

So, we have observed that the entry for the Christ Event into Hellenistic culture was open from the very outset, and that that entry became more than just a means to a paradigm shift in the constant reinterpretation processes. Here we have the primary long-term and widespread "theologia in loco".

II. A MODERN "RE-PRESENTATION"

I now wish to look at a modern situation of cultural dynamics. I am influenced here by much of the modern debate in Asia, Africa and the Pacific. Many Asian Biblical interpreters today encourage oral stories as much as those in written form. Inter-cultural stories too are regarded as as 'significant' as mono-cultural narratives (see, for example, Song, *passim*). Some such narratives I have chosen here. The area is the group of North Moluccan Islands in Eastern Indonesia. From an anthropological viewpoint it is an extremely useful area in which to carry out research, for a number of reasons. First, a comparison of historical accounts by travellers over the past four centuries (E.g., Baretta. pp. 116 ff; Campen, 1882, pp. 438 - 439; Campen, 1883, p. 293.), indicates only the very slightest changes to indigenous pre-literary forms over that period. This is very different from the situations, for example, in some South Pacific Islands (Garrett, *passim*.), or among the varied Australian Aboriginal groupings (Turner, 1974, pp. 189; 192-193.), where Asian or European influences has so dominated pre-literary forms so that today we cannot really know what they were even two centuries ago. There it is very difficult to comprehend how the whole system works, or even which are the genuine vestiges of an original system (Turner, 1986, p. 18). Second, population change through immigration has been very limited. Third, the heartlands of the pre-literary systems have been very isolated; an almost "laboratory-type" situation has occurred. (The term "pre-literary" is used here

to stress the fact that these religions have a long- developed tradition the origins of which would appear to pre-date the appearance of literary forms in the various religions. The term, therefore, seems more neutral and purely descriptive in its use than many other terms (e.g., animistic, primal, primitive). Other terms (e.g. tribal, customary, traditional) seem possible, but also appear to be more applicable to other religions as well than the present use of "pre-literary".)

In looking at it, I shall be mainly concerned to look at the beliefs, and the interaction of beliefs, from the standpoint of the believers, that is, of those involved in the life-systems. I shall not, therefore, be primarily concerned to discuss the various beliefs in terms of structural -functionalism or any other socio-anthropological models. In other words, we are victoriously involved in "being there" in all senses, as far, of course, as that is possible. To the North Moluccan, of course, could be applied the words of Williamson concerning the Akan of Ghana, that "the integration of his (sic) religious views and practices lies not in the fashioning of theological and philosophical structures, but in his socially inculcated personal attitude to the living universe of which he is a part ". (Williamson, p. 86) It is, of course, impossible to dissociate in any way so-called "religious beliefs" from a total understanding of life and the world. For theological reasons, however, I have chosen those particular parts or aspects of the totality of life which are the particular focus of the meeting of the Christian message with other beliefs as our departure-point in this investigation; in doing so, however, we must be aware that we are using one particular "way-in" to view the whole.

In the North Moluccas the term "gikiri" was and is used as a generic word for one of the many local or personal divinities; it is in this sense that in recent years the term has most usually been understood. However, it is clear that the word originally had a much wider meaning. Hueting in 1908 sees the basis of its meaning as "levend wezen, mensch, iemand" ("living being, spirit, human being, someone/anyone") (Hueting, 1908, p. 100.) In other words, he sees in it the elements of "mana" (On this, see Hadiwijono, pp. 11; 17.), permeating nature in general and humanity in particular. What seems clear is that among the North Moluccans the "gikiri" was originally a "mana" type concept more connected with a Supreme Being.

It is doubtless from the breadth of the applications of the "gikiri" - concept that the term "Gikiri Moi" was related to the concept of a High God. We can see that, from "gikiri", which we translate "spirit" or "god", and "moi", the general North Moluccan word for "one", "Gikiri Moi" implies "the One God" or "the One Spirit". Thomas sums up the present understanding of "gikiri Moi" as "the One God (or "Lord")", who is head of all powers which are animistic, dynamistic or 'mana". (Indonesian: "Tuhan Jang Satu, jang

mengepalai segala kekuatan-kekuatan jang animists, dinamistis maupun mana") (Thomas, p. 20; "Tuhan" is the usual Indonesian for (the Christian) "Lord"; it is also frequently used for (the Christian) "God", in order to avoid using the standard Indonesian for "God" (including "the Christian God"), "Allah"). However, it would seem to be inaccurate to think of Gikir Moi in terms of a "deus otiosus".

Below Gikiri Moi are the great company of the "gomanga", the spirits of the dead or, more accurately for the North Moluccans, the living-dead. It would seem that the pre-literary understanding of evil was twofold; first, there was always a tendency for the living-dead, especially of course those who had been insulted, to be jealous of the living, and so cause evil; second, there were simply those forces in nature and in the inter-relationships of the community (in North Moluccan thought there is no great divide between what occurs in nature and what occurs in inter-personal relationships; cf. Fox, *passim*.) which militate against harmony and encourage what is considered evil. Below the gomanga, then, is the world of these village - spirits, termed in the North Moluccans in general "roh- roh" from the Indonesian. From what we have seen, it can be observed that in the pre-literary religious understanding of the North Moluccans the security-creating harmony most closely related to the Christian concept of salvation concerns protection from the village-spirits, the correct relationship with other creatures and nature, the right ties with the gomanga and the hoped-for respect to guarantee one's own future gomanga-status. It seems that for the North Moluccans in general it is accurate to follow Cooley's observations in the Central Moluccas, that is, that "the indigenous religion and adat should be seen as two halves of a whole" (Cooley, p. 482).

The coming of Christianity involved significant movements. It is the *modes* of this activity which we need to note. The Utrecht Missionary Union (U.Z.V.) had begun work in New Guinea. It was formed in 1859, and in 1861 chose the northern coastline of western Nieuw-Guinea as its first missionfield. However, first the work proved to be very disappointing. Both the gossner-missionaries and the U.Z.V. missionaries were constantly beset by illness. It seemed very difficult to make contact with the local population; as a result, as Muller-Kruger puts it,

"Nach 25 Jahren mühevollster und entbehrungsreichster Arbeit zählte man nicht mehr als Getaufte". (Müller-Krüger, p. 155.)

Then, second, on the night of 22nd-23rd May, 1864, an earthquake,

"wierp echter alle plannen omver en bracht den voortgang van het werk een zwaren slag toe". (Rauws, p. 26.)

This event seems to have had a very considerable effect on the Hoofdbestuur of the Mission, as on 15th March, 1865 it was decided to

withdraw from Nieuw-Guinea. Third, there was the influence of a tribesman named Moli upon the missionaries at that time working in New Guinea. This Moli had for a period worked for C.W. Ottow, one of the first Gossner-missionaries in New Guinea. In 1865 Moli arrived with the aim of persuading Jaesrich of the Gossner-Mission and Klaassen of the U.Z.V., to turn their attention to the North Moluccas. What is significant here is that Klaassen was impressed by Moli, and indeed "saw Moli as the Macedonian man was for Paul at Troas". (Rooseboom, p. 9.)

It is important for us to note the factors which the Moluccans themselves considered decisive in prompting the Mission to start work amongst them. Two factors stand out; first, the earthquake in New Guinea is regarded as decisive in turning the Mission's attention away from that area; second the coming of Moli is considered as vital in calling the Mission to the North Moluccas.

Hendrik Van Oijken had received permission to set up his base in the North Moluccas on the fertile land surrounding the Lake of Galela and the other two nearby lakes in the interior. However, the actual point near the main lake which was suggested and granted to him by the Galelarese Hoofden was a place greatly feared by the Galelarese population. The particular area had two Galelarese names. One, "Tomadoa" or "Tumadoa" meant that it was the abode of the primeval giant who was the ancestor of the Galelarese and Lord of the Land. The other name was "Morodoku"; the meaning of the place is the place of the Moros; so, its name is 'morodoku', that is the place on the promontory; 'morodoku' means 'the village belonging to the Moro' or 'Moros'. According to Moluccan beliefs, the Moros were a group of Moluccans who built a kingdom formerly, mainly based on Galela and Morotai; then they and their kingdom disappeared. Therefore, for Moluccans, particularly in the north of the island, the term "the Moro man" means "the man who disappears but returns occasionally"; he is either a member of the original company of Moros who come to visit the area of their former kingdom or someone who has later joined them. Franz cites an example in recent years of a Tobelorese tribeswoman disappearing after declaring that she was a Moro. (Franz, p. 72.) The Moros also show their powers; when the abandoned husband in Franz's example re-married signs of the former wife's presence, in particular earth thrown on the table at the wedding-feast from an unknown source, were noted (cf. Hueting, 1921, pp. 266-269; see Franz, p. 72.); more generally the Moros are associated with malevolent magical powers. It can be seen that here there are elements both of belief in the "living-dead" ancestral spirits in general and of belief in various primeval ancestral giants in particular. In any case, "Morodoku" indicates a centre of power of one or more of these Moros. Therefore, in directing Van

Dijken to this particular point, clearly the Moluccans were arranging a direct confrontation between him and their ancestral heroes who were lords of the land and whose abode was at Tomadoa and Morodoku. Their motivation for this was probably twofold: first, doubtless Muslims at the coastal trading-post, who disliked Van Dijken's insistence to the Sultan that he move inland, encouraged the Galelarese interior Hoofden, who were almost entirely pre-literary religionists, to neutralize Van Dijken's influence in the area by bringing him face-to-face with their "Lords of the Land" so that he would depart in fear from the area, if in fact he survived; second, as Rooseboom points out, "they (i.e. the interior Galelarese) were afraid of his (i.e. Van Dijken's) "god" or "spirit" (Rooseboom, p. 9; see too Kennedy, 1937, p. 294.) (Indonesian: "orang takoet gikinja"), that is to say, they were afraid of his presence among them and its consequences if he had not previously met with their lords of the land. Therefore, it doubtless must have seemed most appropriate to the Galelarese that the issue of the viability of a Christian presence among them should be settled at Tamadoa/Morodoku. The Galelarese, of course, did not expect Van Dijken to survive.

Nevertheless, Van Dijken continued to build up his agricultural work; he was assisted by Moli and a number of Ternatenese; the Moluccans, however, would have no contact with him. As a Gossner-type missionary he aimed through agriculture to provide something at least towards his own costs. From the Moluccan point-of-view the life-and-death issue of the survival of Christianity was being settled at Tomadoa/Morodoku. The fact that Van Dijken survived was to be the first part of the Moluccan "Exodus Experience", (their term). Although no North Moluccan had yet been baptised, and no-one apart from Moli could be considered a serious adherent, Christianity in the Moluccans' eyes was being established on Moluccan soil from the Tomadoa/Morodoku experience of 1866 onwards. For this reason the beginnings of Christianity in the North Moluccas after the Portuguese period are dated not from the first baptisms on North Moluccan soil nor from Moli's baptism but from 19th April, 1866 when Van Dijken started his work in Galela; from that point, because of Van Dijken's determination to enter the interior, for the North Moluccans the Christian God was meeting with the Lords of the Land, and yet was still living.

The second part of the North Moluccan "Exodus Experience" came in 1871. Before that Van Dijken had renamed Tomadoa/Morodoku Duma. He seems to have related it to the Duma (or Dumah) of Isaiah 21 :11, connecting that name with the isolation and quiet of the place. However, the Moluccans were convinced that the name was related to the Galelarese phrase "Duma wi doohawa", meaning "But he (i.e. Van Dijken) was not harmed", which at that time was the reaction in the area to Van Dijken's survival. Then

in December, 1871 the issue of the future relationship between the Galelarese and Christianity (and indeed between the Moluccans as a whole and Christianity) came to a head, in the second part of the North Moluccan "Exodus experience". On 14th, 15th and 16th December there was continuous very heavy rain. As a result a number of the villages around the lake had been swamped as the waters in the lake arose. Then, according to Rooseboom,

"hundreds of people came to him (i.e. Van Dijken) and then Mr Van Dijken told them that they must humble themselves (or "bow themselves down") before God and together pray for the Lord to have pity on them".

At that point twenty-six wished to become Christians, and many wanted their children to enter Van Dijken's school. In response to this Van Dijken held a "openlucht-bidstond", and he on behalf of the Galelarese Hoofden around the lake asked for the rains to stop and the flood-waters, now covering a number of villages, to recede; and, according to Hueting, "den volgenden dag, Zaterdag, was de regen bedaard, haar wij gerust mogen zeggen, als verhooring op het gebed-van Van Dijken". (Hueting, 1928, pp. 117-118; and Van der Crab, pp. 212-213.) The effect of this experience on the Galelarese was to be crucial for the future of the Mission; for the Church historians its importance was of very great significance. Its importance, of course, was not simply related to the fact that a dangerous flood had subsided; of much greater significance for the Moluccans was the meaning of the coming and departing of that flood. Clearly then the coming and departing of the flood was related to the meeting of the various divinities ("gikiri") of the Galelarese and those of Van Dijken and Klaassen, in which those of the latter appeared now to be in control of the situation. However, another element too was involved. This was the theme of a new beginning related to a flood. This theme is found in the North Moluccas with the idea of a part of the population being destroyed and a new beginning made; however, it is not so developed as the traditions of a great flood and the re-peopling of the earth found in Ceram in the Central Moluccas. From this we can see that for the Moluccans the experience of December, 1871 clearly sealed not only that Christianity both had a place in their society and demanded a certain allegiance among them but also that this was to be the beginning of a re-orientation of their lives. For the Moluccans, although no-one (apart from Moli) had yet been baptized, nevertheless this was the primary formative point in the history of modern Christianity in their islands; a real meeting had taken place between Christianity and the pre-literary religious system of the North Moluccas; a new beginning was required, and Christianity demanded Moluccan allegiance. However, it is also important to

note that now Christianity rightfully required of the Moluccans a reorientation of their loyalty in their eyes; it did not, in their view, necessitate a total break with the past. Their pre-literary religious system was being superceded by a new and more efficacious system; it was not being entirely annihilated by the new system, although it was now of course subservient to it. These consequences of the "Exodus experience" at GaleIa are significant.

I now wish to look at the interaction between these beliefs and stories and two world religions, Islam and Christianity, which came into the area. I wish to look mainly at some facets of the mutual interactions of this pre-literary outlook and Christianity, although briefly looking at the interactions with Islam too. I wish to pick up certain salient features, rather than give an overview. Of course there were mutual interactions between Islam and Christianity; but that is outside the scope of this paper.

First, Muslim concepts influenced pre-literary beliefs in a number of ways. There was clearly a strong Muslim influence on the development of the concept of Gikiri Moi as the One High God. Second, pre-literary concepts influenced Islam as it developed in the region. Cady notes that:

"A Sufi-type mysticism, a syncretic faith overlaid with Koranic teachings, was transmitted to the Indies during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries". (Cady, p. 153.)

For example, the pre-literary outlook of Moluccans influenced Islam as it entered the area by encouraging the Sufi mystical movement within Islam. It would seem that the pre-literary animistic, dynamistic and "mana" concepts encouraged the mystical and pantheistic tendencies of Sufism in the tradition of the ways of thinking originally associated with Ibn-al'Arabi of Murcia (Farah, pp. 215-217; Gibb, p. 101; Guillaume, p. 149). There was not a tendency towards asceticism, but there was an emphasis upon mysticism and the paths("tarikas") to achieving mystical and ecstatic union with Allah.

We now look at the interaction of Christianity and certain facets of the pre-literary system.

First, Christianity influenced this system in a number of ways, particularly in relation to the doctrines of the sovereignty and grace of God. The North Moluccans felt that they were coming up against a God whose relationship with them could not be controlled as their relationship with Gikiri Moi could be. The inference from the first part of their "Exodus Experience" was that unpredictably Van Dijken had not died at Tomadoa/Morodoku; the inference from its second part was that quite suddenly the flood had gone down. Therefore, the "gikiri" associated with Van Dijken (and the local and particular appearance of his Gikiri Moi) was not only more powerful than the Galelarese gikiri (and Gikiri Moi); he was also powerful in a new sense

to the Moluccans in that his actions and presence were totally unrelated to any concepts of control or predictability which they had. Thus the sovereign lordship of the Christians' God had first come the Moluccans.

The Christian sense of the sovereignty and self-giving grace of god had far-reaching consequences for the pre-literary outlook. For it was this fact which seemed to be confirmed in the various appropriation events of the Exodus Experience in the tribal areas around the North Moluccas; although many did not there and then enter Christianity, and indeed there was sometimes movement back from Christianity into pre-literary belief, the pre-literary confidence in its system of being able to relate to Gikiri Moi in its own terms and through its own clearly defined system had been broken.

Second, pre-literary influence on Christianity was and is considerable. A good example was the preliterate influence on the relationship between the triune God and the varied gikiri. There was an attempt to work out an integrated system between the Christian triune God and the gikiri and village-spirits.

Firstly, a tendency towards Sabellianism, of course, could be expected in that Gikiri Moi had been integrated into the greater Christian God and He was the unifying basis of all the gikiri; and this in fact seems to have happened. In this tendency to Sabellianism "à la North Moluccas" Christians regarded the varied gikiri as the microcosmic presence in each place of one of the three facets of the triune God. Unlike the situation in Ceram in the Central Moluccas (Cooley, p. 490.), in the North Moluccas the Christian God tended to be regarded more in terms of power-through-presence. Thus in Moluccan Christian thinking there seemed to be either a continued dichotomy where belief in God went in parallel with belief in the varied gikiri within their own responsibilities or especially the more integrated "Moluccan Sabellian" concept of macrocosm represented in microcosm.

Secondly, in parallel to this, there was a strong but negative pre-literary influence on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. As we have seen, the whole system had been related to the Powerfulness-through-Presence. Thus, although the facet of the Holy Spirit was received, it was very greatly minimised. This came about not in opposition to the fact, but because of the fact, that the gikiri/Gikiri Moi system had been related to "spirits", and so, once it had been integrated into Fatherhood and Sonship ideas, it found no or little "Anknüpfungspunkt" left for relationship with Holy Spirit concepts. This was further vitiated by the terms used in the island for the Spirit. The North Moluccan languages, which dominated the whole Church's thinking, used a number of variations on the same meaning-spectrum for the translation of the term, "Womaha" and "Ngomasa" and their variants suggest a fine ethereal wind, while "Debi-debini" and its variant suggest that which is very

pure. So a very pure, ethereal wind was the vehicle given to carry the Holy Spirit concepts. In the first 1874 North Moluccan translation of the Apostles' Creed the translators simply imported the Malay "Roh Elkoedoes" in their translation. But while in western Indonesia this Malay term had a connection with pre-literary and Muslim understanding, and through Arabic could be the vehicle to carry the thrust of πνεῦμα, Πῑπ, in eastern Indonesia this was not possible. Thus where the Malay/Indonesian "Roh Kudus" had both a connection with indigenous belief and a connection with Semitic thought it would seem reasonable to expect that something within the Biblical meaning-spectrum could be transferred to where the term had vogue. In the Moluccas this term had no such vogue. So the pure-ethereal-wind concept as a feasible vehicle which was not associated with the gikiri-complex was used. As, however, the gikiri-complex had been incorporated into the Powerfulness-through-Presence ideas, the result was that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit became largely an incomprehensible addendum. Powerfulness-through-Presence was the vehicle for the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Another factor was related to this. At times there occurred an intensity of experience, belief and worship within the general North Moluccan pre-literary religious outlook. Related to this was a Messianic tendency in religious thinking until recent years. At various times the movement to raise up a "Just or Benevolent Prince" began in this area. It does not seem, however, that such a belief was indigenous, but rather an imported concept; nevertheless it played an important part in the thinking in the area in the late-Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. In this clearly there was a combination of religious and political outlook. This belief in the Coming-Just-Prince had considerable significance in their circumstance.

Here again, in this "laboratory-type" situation, we have observed how the entry of the Christ Event into North Moluccan culture became at least a means to a paradigm shift in a re-presentation and reinterpretation process.

III. SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Transition, translation, transposing, transplanting, transferring, transforming, transfiguring are varying expressions of the intercultural activity to which Christians are called and in which Biblical interpreters bear a special responsibility.

The entry of the Christ Event into Hellenistic culture had overwhelming consequences. However, the later entries also involved paradigm shifts in the re-interpretation process. The "Macedonian man" is well attested in many parts of the world. However the Moluccan "Exodus Experience" is not. Moreover, it is confirmed in the Moluccan accounts which speak of the Spirit's "coming-without-conversion-yet" and "Powerfulness-through-Presence". The early dogmatic discussion within Christianity involved

the interweaving of the Christ Event into, and transfiguration by the Christ Event of, Hellenism and its successors. But if the Christ Event is interwoven into, and transfigures, another culture with a much more ancient and much richer background (as in the case of certain pre-literary cultures), then could not the impact of that Christ Event become clearer? (See Boyd, 1974 and 1977, *passim*.)

How far was clarity produced by the fact that the Christ Event initially became interwoven with, and transfigured, Hellenistic culture and its successors? Much of Western Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand is heir to that Christ Event in Jewish, Greek, Latin, Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, German and French traditions, largely within succeeding cyclic-cultures. Do those interweavings of, and transfigurations by, the Christ Event, bring it out in total clarity? Or do other places do so more strongly?

We can see how the Christ Event must live, and yet transfigure, the culture in which it is placed, always at the same time struggling with the fact that it is the Divine which nevertheless has entered this world. It is perhaps because the Christ Event can never be exclusively identified either with one culture or one type of culture that Paul employs the ambiguous term " ἡ ὁκοή " (e.g., Romans 10:16-17; Galatians 3:2; see Taylor, p. 254) to describe the action by which the Christ Event enters a person's or a community's life, that is, the crucial step that leads to faith. Following from what Käsemann pointed out in the early 1950's (See Käsemann, 1951-1952, and 1952-1953) in relation to the varied New Testament theologies, the Christ Event must become pagan in the original meaning of that term ("must be earthed"), and yet must also be under the opposing Divine criticism.

Later entries of the Christ Event into other cultures are traditionally supposed to have produced theological expressions in a variety of the following three ways. First, there is a "baptism" of pre-Christian cultural expressions into Christianity. Second, there is the running in parallel and occasional positive or negative interaction of Christian and non-Christian beliefs and expressions. Third, there is the production of new Christian theological formulation and praxis. Frequently in one culture all three ways are involved to some degree.

For Biblical interpretation it is not sufficient simply to observe the three above for each culture. More needs to be done and for this reason I use "Biblical interpretation" in as wide a sense as possible. First, the base paradigm-shift factor for each culture needs to be observed. (For the North Moluccans, this is the complex of ideas surrounding their "Exodus Experience", and the Spirits "Coming-without-conversions-yet" and "Powerless-through-presence"). Second, it does not need to be assumed that the

interpretation *into* the culture need be as complex as that *out of* the largely Hellenistic paradigm (for the New Testament of least). C. S. Song speaks of the self-renewing qualities of a culture. Many other Asian theologians, for example, would see it more in terms of a culture which is clearer than that of Hellenism and its successors to the reception and expression of the Christ Event. Third, on the basis of this second point, there needs to be a continuous interaction between Biblical text (in Asia, often referred to as "Text A") and a parallel text (and or written) from the culture, as defined on the basis in the first point above. ("Text B"). (on these last two points, see, for example, Song, *passim*).

Biblical interpretation, therefore, at once becomes wider (into a broader range of questions, including the experiential and communal) and more focussed (into a particular culture). "Knowing" contexts is more a matter of living them than grasping them. Biblical interpretation is thus not common semantics but is rather diversely grounded in each culture, largely through the effects of the "primary Christian events" of the culture where there has been an appropriation of the Gospel or Christ Event.

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JOURNAL AND SERIES ABBREVIATIONS:

- Bijd -Bijdragen tot de Taal -, Land-en Voldendunde van Nederlansch-Indië (uitgegeven door het Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal -, Land- en Volkendunde van Nederlandsch-Indië). 's-Gravenhage.
- M.E.B. -Mededeelingen van het Bureau voor de Bestuurszaken der Buitenbezittingen, bewerkt door het Encyclopaedisch Bureau. Weltevreden (Batavia, Java).
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- T.N.J -Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië. Batavia (Java).

James Haire, an Irishman who served for many years as a missionary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in Indonesia, is Principal of Trinity College, Brisbane, Professor of New Testament and Dean of the Brisbane College of Theology.

ROMANS 12:9-21 - A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE
PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION

Kim Paffenroth

The twelfth chapter of Romans marks the beginning of the parenthetic section of the epistle. Verses 1-2 function as an introduction or summary of the chapter. Verses 3-8 enumerate and make statements about specific charismatic gifts or functions, while verses 9-21 move on to more general exhortations for the entire Christian community, [Cranfield, p. 628-629; Leenhardt, p. 313; Murray, v. II, p. 128; Käsemann, p. 344, although he tries through some subtle distinction to distance himself from the others]. Painted with strokes this broad, the purpose of v. 9-21 appears quite clear. However, closer inspection of this section reveals numerous problems of both translation and interpretation.

First, regarding the section as a whole, there is the nagging question of what is the unifying feature of the section. Although the section certainly "feels" like a unity to most, (attempts to break the section down further have been suggested from time to time, [Franzmann, p. 223-230; Baules, p. 260-269], but the section is in general acknowledged to hang together as a unit somehow,) attempts to explain its unifying feature tend to fall flat. Most often it is said that v. 9 is a topic sentence for the section: the section is an explication of what "sincere love" is, [Dodd, p. 196-201; Dunn, p. 739; Nygren, p. 423-426], or even more especially, what it means for love to be "sincere", [Lagrange, p. 301; Spicq, p. 198-210]. These attempts, though perhaps true enough as a broad statement about the section, when pushed too far are rightly criticized, [Cranfield, p. 628-631; Käsemann, p. 343]. Some even emphasize the role of "the (Holy) Spirit" as a central aspect of the section, [Leenhardt, p. 313], a tenuous position, given only one ambiguous reference to "spirit" in the section. Cranfield seems to be one of the more honest when he unimpressively labels the section "A Series of Loosely Connected Items of Exhortation" [Cranfield, p. 628]. Although Spicq certainly overstates his case for unifying the section around an explication of how love is to be "sincere", in his argument he does make a useful observation about the recurrence of the words for good and evil, ("agathos/kalos" and "poneros/kakos,") in the section, [Spicq, p. 200]. All would agree that whatever organization the section has, it is based on "Stichwort" - catchwords or implied word associations, [Dunn, p. 737]. Spicq follows through on this by observing that the words good/evil occur at the beginning of the section, "hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good," v. 9; the middle, (approximately), "Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is good in the sight of all," v. 17; and at the end, making an inclusio, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good," v. 21. The section can thus be said to revolve around a discussion of good and evil, certainly appropriate in a section on ethics. This seems more

convincing than trying to make the section center on "love" or "spirit", words which only occur once in the entire section.

V. 9 presents the least problems of translation. It is, of course, by now a mere truism to note the special significance of ἀγάπη in early Christian circles. The noun has thus far in Romans only been used to refer to God's love, (5:5, 8; 8:39,) or Christ's love, (8:35). The verbal form has been used of human love of God, (8:28,) and of divine love for humanity, (8:37; 9:13, 25). This is then the first time in the epistle that it is used of human relations with one another, (as it is subsequently at 13:10 and 14:15). The paradigmatic feeling of human/divine relations is now advanced as the standard to be aimed at in inter-personal relations. Whether this is intended here to refer only to love of fellow-Christians or to a more wide understanding of love of those outside the church as well is unclear, [Cranfield, p. 630]. The verbs in the second half of the verse used are unusually strong, ἀποστύγω - "to detest utterly, hate" (only here in the NT); πονηρός - "evil, wicked" (only here in Romans) - as opposed to the more usual κακός - "bad"; and κολλῶ - "to stick with, cling to, join to." The usual observation to make at this point is to seize on the word "love" and the discussion of the body which precedes it and therefore compare this verse and what follows to 1 Cor 13, [Dodd, p. 198; Murray, v. II, p. 128; Nygren, p. 423-426], but the second half of the verse makes a comparison with the paranetic section ending at I Thess 5:21-22 more apt, [Dunn, p. 740], "hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil."

In v. 10, the readers are told to "show familial affection for one another in brotherly love." The use of "brother" for fellow-members of a religious group was hardly unique to Christianity, being also used by Jews as well as the followers of Mithras and others, [Cranfield, p. 631; Dunn, p. 741; for a more extensive list, Lagrange, p. 302]. However, the combination of these two words here, as well as the redundant "one another", does seem striking. The second half of the verse presents problems of translation with the verb "proegeomai". Cranfield seems to have the most objective and detailed presentation of the possibilities, [Cranfield, p. 632-633]. It has been rendered in at least three ways: "outdo one another," [RSV]; "anticipate" or "precede one another," ("beat one to it,") [Spicq, p. 201; Kirk, p. 232; O'Neill, p. 201-202; Dunn, p. 741]; and "prefer" or "esteem more highly," [Käsemann, p. 346; Cranfield, p. 632-633]. The third possibility seems the most tenuous, given the extremely thin textual evidence for such a meaning for the verb, (2Mac 10:12 and a textual variant of Phil 2:3). However, none of the translations are completely convincing, and it will probably have to be left at that.

There are two major problems of translation in v. 11, and on both of them, many modern scholars seem to have missed the mark. The first is the question of what type of πνεῦμα is referred to here? Oddly, although the

overwhelming majority of translations interpret it to be "fervent in spirit," [KJV, JB, NJB, NEB, NIV], a great many modern commentators side with the RSV in interpreting it as "aglow with the (Holy) Spirit," [Cranfield, p. 633-634; Käsemann, p. 346; Dunn, 742; Barrett, p. 240]. There are several problems with this translation. First, the burden of proof would seem to be on those who wish to translate it as "Holy Spirit" to produce some reason why the context demands or even suggests it; none have done so. Secondly, the parallel with Acts 18:25, (the only other NT occurrence of the verb ζέω,) tells against this translation, since in that passage all unquestioningly agree that the translation must be "fervent in spirit." Finally, as Barrett's comment admits, [Barrett, p. 240], this translation relies in part on the parallel with "the Lord" in the last part of the verse, which is a questionable text which will be discussed next. The commentators seem to be using two dubious readings to prop up one another.

In the last part of v. 11, there are several manuscripts which read καρῶ instead of κυρίῳ. Again, Cranfield seems to have the best presentation of the evidence for and against this variant, [Cranfield, p. 634-636]. In favor of reading καρῶ is: 1) that it is certainly the more difficult reading, and no reason can be advanced as to why someone would want deliberately to substitute it in place of κυρίῳ, whereas the reverse substitution is easily imagined; 2) that "the Lord" seems rather out of place in this list, (I would again add that, as per Barrett's admission cited above, it seems less out of place if one reads "Holy Spirit" instead of just "spirit" in the previous clause); 3) that a reference to the eschatological "time" would seem very much in place in this list, especially in light of the use of the term at 13:11. Despite his more or less granting all of these objections, Cranfield, along with many other commentators, [Cranfield, p. 635-636; Barrett, p. 234; Dunn, p. 737; Murray, vol. II, p. 131], nonetheless favors the reading "the Lord," postulating a convenient scribal error from a damaged or abbreviated manuscript. An argument in favor of rejecting "serving the time" is that it has the pejorative connotation of "opportunism" in other writers, but the examples adduced are either Latin, (Cicero,) or much later Greek, (Plutarch,) [Cranfield, p. 635], and neither of these authors seems particularly relevant in bringing light to an eschatologically oriented text such as this. Once again, although his analysis is flawed and dated in some respects, Spicq seems to have been more objective than many others when he rendered this verse as, "be fervent in spirit; meet the demands of the hour," [Spicq, p. 199; cf. also O'Neill, p. 202].

V. 12 is a rather uncontroversial verse, although the eschatological outlook of it, with its references to "hope" and "tribulation", again lends more likelihood to the reading of καρῶ in the previous verse. The verse is typical

of the Pauline "already/not yet" of eschatological tension: the eschaton has already begun, and this causes the believers to "rejoice", while knowing that there is still much more to come, for which they have great "hope" and expectation. Also, despite their present rejoicing, and hope for more to come, the believers know that the beginning of the eschaton is characterized by birth-pangs of "tribulation", which will require that they be "enduring" and "persistent in prayer."

V. 13 is likewise not especially troublesome, although there is one textual difficulty. Several manuscripts read *μνησικ* instead of *χρησικ*. Using the same criteria as we did in v. 11, we should be inclined to accept *μνησικ* as the original reading, since it is the more difficult. However, this would be to ignore its consistent usage in Paul, where it is always used to mean remembrances in prayer or thought, most often in the greeting of the letter, (Rom 1:9; 1 Thess 1:2, 3:6; Philemon 4; Phil 1:3), and never practical and concrete deeds of kindness and aid, as the parallel with "hospitality" demands it must refer to here. The suggestion that it was a merely mechanical error of mistaking "XP" for "MN" because they look alike (?!), [Cranfield, p. 638; Dunn, p. 737], does seem unlikely, however. The variant would seem rather to have been substituted at a later date when "saints" meant those of the past, and it had become a common practice to commemorate or intercede for them posthumously, [Käsemann, p. 346; Lagrange, p. 304-305]. Aside from this textual question, the verse is a clear call for practical aid amongst Christians. It need not be a specific reference to the collection for Jerusalem, [Barrett, p. 240], although that would certainly be a clear example of the type of concern which is encouraged here; nor need we interpret "contributing to the needs of the saints" as implying a lack of concern for all others, [Cranfield, p. 639]. "Hospitality" would have been of especial concern in antiquity for two reasons: first, for religious reasons, as both paganism and Judaism stressed benevolence towards strangers, (Zeus as protector of strangers; Abraham showing hospitality to the three heavenly visitors, alluded to in Heb 13:2), and early Christianity followed along this path, [Dunn, p. 743-744]; secondly, for practical reasons, as lodgings were evidently hard to come by, [Käsemann, p. 346-347; Dunn, p. 744]. This importance seems to be stressed by the use of the verb *διώκω* - the readers are told to "pursue" hospitality.

This verb provides the connector between v. 13 and 14, though it has now shifted to the meaning "persecute". There are two very minor textual questions in this verse, (omission of the second *εὐλογεῖτε* and omission of *ὑμῶν* neither of which changes the meaning of the verse substantially, [Cranfield, p. 640, against Bruce, p. 229]. The Semitic background here for the idea of "blessing" should be strongly stressed over against its Greek meaning: in

Greek usage, the verb means merely "to speak well of, to eulogize," whereas its Hebrew background is what is in mind here, where it means to call upon YHWH to bestow blessings upon someone, [Dunn, p. 744]. To do this for an enemy is a radical command indeed, either here or in the Synoptics. A real question, if not of meaning, than at least of the history of traditions, is how this uncited "quote" by Paul is related to the tradition preserved in the Synoptics. A very tentative suggestion of Pauline knowledge of the Jesus tradition, [Cranfield, p. 640], seems overly cautious, although some claims in the other direction do seem overstated, "...the Jesus-tradition was evidently of fundamental importance to him (Paul)," [Wenham, p. 24]. It seems safe to say that Paul clearly knew of the Jesus tradition in a form close to that of the Synoptics; and, significantly, in these verses, in a form closer to that of Luke 6:27-38, a section generally acknowledged to most probably go back to the historical Jesus, [Allison, p. 10-12].

In v. 15, the thought of the passage again turns to "rejoicing," "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep." This time, though, the exhortation strangely does not have the eschatological urgency of other similar NT passages, (e.g. Jn 16:20; Lk 6:21, 25), in which rejoicing is said to turn to weeping, and vice versa, in the approaching eschatological age, [Dunn, p. 746]. This verse seems to be more concerned with the mutual support of Christians in the present age, and perhaps their support and commiseration with outsiders as well, [Cranfield, p. 642], the latter attitude perhaps with missionary intent, [Daube, p. 162-164]. Significantly, this verse is strongly anti-Stoic, utterly opposed to their ideal of impassive detachment, ἀπαρρόγια, [Bruce, p. 229; Käsemann, p. 347].

V. 16 is held together by catchwords from the "phron-" word group. The readers are first told "to think the same thing with one another," in the sense of "agree with one another," [Cranfield, p. 642-643], with the extended meaning of "live in harmony with one another" [Dunn, p. 746] (cf. Rom 15:5; 2Cor 13:11). Again, the attitude may have a missionary intent, either in the sense that the Christians' harmonious living amongst themselves will be an example to others, [Cranfield, p. 643], or in the sense that their harmonious attitude to their non-Christian neighbors will help convert them, [Daube, p. 162-164].

In the next two clauses of v. 16, the thought moves from the unity encouraged in the first clause to warnings against pride or ambition, which could naturally cause disunity or strife within the community. The readers are first told not to "mind high things." This would evidently be a warning against ambition, but the parallel with 11:20 implies more of a concern with haughtiness or pride, as some members of the community might lord their supposed spiritual superiority over others, [Dunn, p. 746; Cranfield, p.

643-644]. Although a distinction between pride and ambition is certainly possible and may even be helpful, the two do seem inter-related enough that it would not drastically alter the meaning of the passage: certainly overly-ambitious members of the community could be just as destructive. Whatever the negative attitude here discouraged, the cure is to "associate with the lowly things/people" and to "not esteem yourselves wise" (Prov 3:7 LXX, here in the plural). Whether ταπεινός is neuter - "things", or masculine - "people", is unclear: the parallelism with ὑψηλὰ favors the former, usage in the NT as a whole favors the latter. Again, this does not involve a drastic change in meaning: obviously humility is what is being encouraged here. Also, this verse again differs from Greek thought, where ταπεινός is someone or something base, and certainly not to be associated with, [Dunn, p. 747].

In v. 17, the thought of the passage turns to the Christian's attitude towards retribution in general, which will be further specified in v. 19 as "vengeance". As with blessing and cursing in v. 14, the reader is told not to give back the same treatment as he has received. There is some question in the second half of the verse as to how ἐν ὧπιον should be taken. To take it as the equivalent of a dative, "take thought for the good to all people," [Michel, p. 276], seems not to be supported by Biblical usage, especially the two passages which v. 17 clearly echoes, Prov 3:4 and II Cor 8:21, which clearly refer to "what is noble in the sight of the Lord." Here too it should be rendered as "take thought for what is noble in the sight of all" [RSV - Dunn, p. 748]. Cranfield seems to be over-interpreting when he takes the prepositional phrase with the verb, "take thought, in the sight of all, for what is good (in reality)" [Cranfield, p. 645-646]. (Cranfield seems here to show a post-Holocaust hyper-sensitivity about making sure all Christian ethics are henceforth kept above reproach; it is a fault we can surely forgive.) Certainly the idea of appealing to Christians to at least keep to the "lowest common denominator" of pagan ethics, (i.e. Justice, Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude,) is not an unworthy task, (cf. II Cor 8:21).

In v. 18, another difficult command is given, "live peaceably with all," but unlike any other in the section, this one is given a striking double-qualifier, "if possible, in so far as it depends on you." Paul shows his practical side here, but this should not be seen as an escape clause, [*pace* O'Neill, p. 206]: the Christian still cannot curse, (v. 14), cannot return the same treatment as he has received, (v. 17), and cannot seek revenge on his own, (v. 19). Despite this benign demeanor, it is still possible that he will not be able to "live peaceably" in his community: like Socrates or Jesus, a martyr, although not seeking to harm anyone, is nonetheless not "living peaceably" within his community; only a complete collaborator would be, [Murray, v. II, p. 139-140], (cf. Mt

10:34-36//Lk 12:51-53).

In v. 19, the thought of the passage turns to "vengeance". It is first expressed in the negative command, "Do not avenge yourselves," with the result that the believers will thereby "make room for the wrath (of God)." Vengeance is not to be sought by Christians not because vengeance is bad per se, but because vengeance is the particular prerogative of God. Human attempts at vengeance are therefore acts of hubris and attempts at the usurpation of God's powers; besides that, human attempts at vengeance can never hope to be as effective and devastating as divine retribution. There is the implication that the action is not only sinful, but it is impractical. It is not necessary to assume here that "the wrath" is purely future; as at Rom 1:18, particular acts of retribution may already have begun to be enacted by God against the wicked, [Dunn, p. 749-750]. The negative command is stated, and the reason for it is given in the second part of the verse by means of a scriptural citation, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay" (Deut 32:35). (Interestingly, Paul's quote is not exactly the MT nor the LXX. As at Heb 10:30, it is closer to the Targums, and a variant text among the diaspora churches may be supposed, [Cranfield, p. 647; Dunn, p. 749; Käsemann, p. 348-349].)

This pattern of command and scriptural citation is repeated in v. 20, though here the two are one and the same in the positive command, "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head" (Prov 25:21-22). This time, Paul follows the LXX almost exactly. Although it certainly contains a most unnatural and hard to follow ethical demand, no commentator has ever had any problem with the first half of the verse, while the second half has been a bone of contention since patristic times. Chrysostom interpreted the "burning coals" as referring to future divine punishment, [cited by Cranfield, p. 648-649, among others]. On the other hand, Jerome and Augustine interpreted the "burning coals" as burning shame or remorse which might serve to reform or convert the enemy, [cited by Stendahl, p. 346, among others]. Origen gave both interpretations and has therefore been cited by modern commentators on both sides of the issue as supporting their claims, [Stendahl, p. 346; Cranfield, p. 649]. How shall we resolve this ancient dispute?

It seems that the evidence for interpreting "burning coals" as divine punishment is overwhelming. The obvious, graphic imagery points strongly in this direction. Also, in the list he compiled, [Spicq, p. 208,] Spicq observed that in the OT, "burning coals" always mean divine anger, punishment for the wicked, or an evil passion, (2Sam 22:9; Ps 18:9, 13; Ps 140:11; Sir 8:10, 11:32; Prov 6:27-29); the image never has a positive connotation. Why, or even how, could Paul have used it in such a way here? The most obvious answer, (and

in a way the most honest one,) is to state flatly that he meant it in a positive sense because he **MUST** have meant it in a positive sense: "...it is out of the question to interpret the image of heaping burning coals on the head as an aggravation of divine chastisement" [Leenhardt, p. 319]; "...it cannot mean that by the Christian's loving action his enemy will be made to suffer more" [Best, p. 146]. Most commentators are much more coy, however, and advance various arguments. Suggested emendations of the Hebrew text of Prov 25:21-22, [Dahood, p. 19-24; Ramaroson, p. 230-234], are, of course, irrelevant for the interpretation of the LXX or Paul. Also irrelevant are observations about an Egyptian repentance ritual, [Morenz, col. 187-192], which even its proponents are forced to admit Paul (and his audience) knew nothing about, [Klassen, p. 347]. Appeals to Rabbinic interpretation, [Cranfield, p. 649], are not only rather out of character for Christian exegetes, but are also very selective: when referred to the evil impulse, this verse was indeed interpreted by the Rabbis to mean "and the Lord will make him your friend" [quoted by Cranfield, p. 649, and Stendahl, p. 347-348]. But when applied to human enemies, the text was interpreted quite differently: it was interpreted in connection with Esther's entrapment of Haman, and even more graphically, it was compared "With a baker who stood before the bake oven; his enemy comes, he scoops up glowing coals and places them upon his head. His friend comes and he takes out warm bread and gives it to him. The glowing coals and the bread, both come out of the same oven, likewise God dropped coals of fire on the Sodomites and manna upon the Israelites" [quoted by Klassen, p. 344-345].

About the only substantive argument that can be advanced against interpreting "burning coals" as divine punishment is that it does not fit well with the context of the passage as a whole, but most especially that it is disconsonant with v. 21. However, any other interpretation would make v. 20 equally disconsonant with v. 19, where divine vengeance is acknowledged as the way things are and should be. Furthermore, if the enemies of God and his people are punished as a result of the believer's doing good, then this too could be interpreted as what is referred to in v. 21, "overcome evil with good" [Stendahl, p. 353-354]. The image of v. 20 may be shocking, but it is not nearly as out of place in the passage as would be the idea of the enemy's repentance, an idea which never seems to occur in this passage.

I would go even further, however. Although several modern commentators do interpret "burning coals" as divine punishment, [Stendahl, p. 343-355; Piper, p. 114-119; Spicq, p. 207-208], I do not think even they have gone far enough in being honest about what Paul means here. All of them stop short of saying that Paul is here at least tolerating if not encouraging his readers to do a good thing with a "bad" motivation, "...vv 19 and 20 probably

were not intended by Paul to mean: do good deeds to your enemy with the hope of bringing wrath down on him" [Piper, p. 117]. All commentators, no matter how they interpret "burning coals", ultimately seem to agree that it must mean something "good": it is then just a question of how "good" the particular commentator acknowledges divine judgment and punishment to be. The suggestion that v. 20 is really talking about "bad" motivations which can cause some Christians nonetheless to do the right thing seems off-limits.

But is this suggestion so far-fetched? It is, of course, another truism to observe that Paul was not a systematic theologian, but a practical man, a preacher and organizer of churches, who felt hard-pressed by the imminent eschaton. His mottoes would seem to have been, "If it advances the gospel, then do it," and, "If it works, then don't fix it," hardly the trademarks of a Tillich or Barth. Presented with the possibility of encouraging some people who have bad intentions to do the right thing anyway, it seems likely that Paul would have jumped at the chance. He says as much at Phil 1:17-18, "the former proclaim Christ out of partisanship, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in that I rejoice." While it would be far too general to say that NT or Biblical ethics were unconcerned with motives, it seems equally premature to assume that they would have been as concerned with motives as modern thinkers are, dominated as we are by Cartesian mind/body dualism and other insidious modernisms. The above quote from Philippians shows at least nonchalance with regard to motives, as do several parables from the Gospel of Luke: the Friend at Midnight (Lk 11:5-8), the Parable of the Dishonest Steward (Lk 16:1-8), and the Parable of the Widow and the Judge (Lk 18:1-5). While the meanings of all three of these parables are hard to come to and cannot be discussed here, they do seem emphatic as to the kind of behavior they seek to encourage, but at least ambiguous or even unconcerned as to the kind of motive or attitude they are encouraging. (It is interesting that all three examples should be parables peculiar to Luke. Perhaps the old pietistic notion that Luke and Paul were close associates could have received some support from this observation of their similarly cavalier attitude toward motives!) Likewise, at Rom 12:20, it hardly seems as inconceivable as some would suggest that Paul is here using an argument aimed at encouraging some people who would hate their enemies no matter what, nonetheless to do the Christian thing and practice kindness toward them.

We have tried to examine the major problems of translation and interpretation in Romans 12:9-21. We may now make some concluding observations about this passage and its interpretation. First, it must be acknowledged that the passage moves freely, (one is constantly tempted to say

"Rabbinically" or "midrashically"), by word associations: any attempt to impose an ingenious organization, strict logic, or pietistic unity on it should be abandoned. Secondly, it is, of course, a very eschatologically oriented set of ethical injunctions: this should constantly be kept in mind. Finally, since it is from the hand of Paul and is so eschatologically oriented, it should always be remembered that it is primarily a practical text, a text which is trying with some urgency to encourage certain types of behavior, a text concerned primarily with what the readers are supposed to do: if motivations were in the author's mind at all, they certainly did not loom as large as they do to the modern mind.

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Kim Paffenroth is a graduate student at the University of Notre Dame and an alumnus of Harvard Divinity School and St John's College, Annapolis.

Book Reviews.

Tim Hamilton, Brian Lennon and Gerry O'Hanlon, *Solidarity - the Missing Link in Irish Society.* Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, Dublin 1991. £2.95.

The authors of this book are moved to plead for a new sense of solidarity. They quote Oxford Dictionary definition of solidarity "as holding together, mutual dependence, community of interests, feelings and actions." They discuss factors which would help the development of solidarity, and its resulting impact on "poverty, education and the Republic's relationship with Northern Ireland." The book's four chapters relate solidarity to Civic Society,

Northern Conflict, Pastoral Life and Theological Reflection. I found it difficult, at least in theory, to disagree with any of the main thrusts of the authors. Yet the book did not grip me, nor excite me. Three reasons suggest themselves:

The first revolves round the idea of solidarity itself. To begin with it is not a word with resonances in either my experienced or imagination. I therefore have to work hard to apply it to situations which are outside the idioms familiar to me. To "have solidarity" with someone or some body of people, implies for me a cohering around one major issue, or passion, or concern - with people on a crusade of some kind, with people expressing a protest or making a plea for a change.

There is a solidarity of creed, or tribe, or family, or trade union, or political party, or race. But it revolves around the uniting factor within each grouping. There is solidarity in Irish society. But it is a solidarity of tribal identity, or political aspiration, of feeling threatened by the "other sort". It is a sectional solidarity which separates rather than unites. I did not find this book dealing effectively with how the existing solidarities are to yield, or to be dissolved, in favour of a new sense of ecumenical togetherness and national oneness.

My second are of frustration with this book is in its approach to the problems discussed. Perhaps it is the style which bothers me. It deals with some of the most threatening ills of contemporary Western society - "the nature and scale of unemployment", "terrible individualism." It cites violence, wars, famine and poverty. It analyses irritants to both sides in the Northern Conflict. It speaks of the deaths and losses and suffering. Yet it is so polite to failures and villains.

Solidarity is achieved by heat, by great love or great fear or great anger. It needs a welding agent to make disparate units fuse strongly. The separated tribes of African territories were brought together in the quest for independence by giving them a common foe. I needed emotion in the writing of this book to help me believe that solidarity in Ireland is achievable. I could not find it. Nor could I find the great uniting impulse which would draw us together over and above our existing localised solidarities.

Maybe it betrays my Protestant conditioning, but I wanted to be evangelised; to be preached at, to have the gospel hurled at me with prophetic fury. This book makes the points - "Solidarity, then is a concept that makes demands on us at both a human and a Christian level ... and it challenges us to cut off the dead wood of destructive certainties and open ourselves to a new relationship with the people who are actually inhabiting this island at the same time as ourselves" - points with which I cannot but agree. But they do not shove me into action.

The third question I ask of this book is very simply "To whom is it addressed?" There is something for economists, something for Christians, something for politicians, something for Churchmen, something perhaps for people who are themselves in all four of these categories. I am bound to wonder, however, if it is aimed at any particular readership, and if failure to target a definite section of "the market" does not contribute to the feeling of blandness.

The best section of the book for me is the Conclusion. Had I read it first and then proceeded with the rest, I might have been more gripped by the useful analyses offered and the questions posed.

David Lapsley.

Walter Brueggemann, *Finally comes the Poet: Daring Speech for Proclamation*, Fortress Press, 1989.

It was a strange and slightly uncomfortable experience to read a book in which I felt such a mismatch between my own expectations and what seems to have been the author's intentions. I am a long-term fan of Walter Brueggemann: dating back to his earliest writings and my own undergraduate career in the late 1960s and early 1970s I have avidly devoured the articles and books that have come from his pen. I have seldom been disappointed: Brueggemann has the enviable skill of holding together scripture and the human situation, and allowing each to address the other. His work has never been narrowly academic: rather by a flash of insight, or by focusing our attention on something in the biblical text which was always there but which we could so easily have missed, he has illuminated the Bible for many who would normally be sceptical of the contribution scholarship can make to faith. Nor does Walter Brueggemann disappoint in the flesh. I will never forget the delicious twinkle in his eye (which can be spotted on the back cover of the book under review!) as I heard him pronouncing "The Bible is subversive!" I remember too defending him and his work against a colleague who dismissed his classic book The Land as merely existentialist: those of us who have lived in the Middle East are only too aware that land, its gain and its loss, is the existential question: any treatment of the Bible which focuses on the subject of land, must surely have an existentialist dimension, or else it also lacks reality.

So why do I find myself slightly disappointed in *Finally Comes the Poet*? Perhaps, as I have hinted above, it may say as much about me as about the book in question. In the last few years Brueggemann's increasing popularity has led to books spilling off his pen (or his word-processor) at a similarly increasing rate of knots. It has also led, and rightly so, to a large

number of invitations from academic institutions around the world to deliver lecture series. The present book, in fact, is essentially the manuscript of a series of lectures delivered in 1989 at Yale Divinity School: apparently the lectures in question are by definition necessarily on the subject of preaching. That is the book's starting point, and perhaps it is also its weakness. For somehow that 'conversation' between biblical tradition and human experience which Brueggemann has conducted so expertly and profitably in the past, seems this time to have become slightly unbalanced. There are still occasional nuggets of gold as Brueggemann leads us to reflect creatively, for example, on the biblical treatment of the Sabbath legislation (which I myself found particularly pertinent in view of the current debate in England on Sunday trading). But such concrete nuggets have on the whole to be searched for amidst a considerable welter of 'waffle', some of it admittedly very perceptive, but other aspects of which seem to witness mainly to Brueggemann's own particular concerns and agendas - and to his insistence on words being defined as he wishes them to be so. I felt slight shades of *Alice in Wonderland* to be surfacing as I read Brueggemann's definition of the words prose and poetry: "By prose I refer to a world that is organized in settled formulae, so that even pastoral prayers and love letters sound like memos. By poetry, I do not mean rhyme, rhythm or meter, but language that moves like Bob Gibson's fast ball, that jumps at the right moment, that breaks open old worlds with surprise, abrasion and pace." (p.3)

Perhaps my irritation level at this point was increased due to my ignorance of the significance of Bob Gibson (indeed the number of American allusions throughout the book are slightly offputting to a non-American reader). However, even though I know what Brueggemann is getting at, and on the whole agree with his vision, I still find that I want words to mean what their common understanding suggests they should mean. There is almost an inadvertent intellectual snobbery around in the redefinitions on which this book at times is based. One soon discovers that the poet who finally comes in the book's title might not be recognizable as such to many people in the pews. Though the Psalms and the poetic sections of the prophetic book of Jeremiah are discussed in the course of the work, they are far from being its main focus, indeed, the biblical book which receives the most attention seems to be that of Daniel. In fairness, Brueggemann throws out some allusive hints that suggest that it would be good if at some future date he had a chance to further develop his thoughts on the nature of apocalyptic - but he doesn't or can't take the opportunity in this present work.

I sense that Finally Comes the Poet may be a book too far or too many. Too many if Brueggemann has been placed on a publishing treadmill from which he can't for the moment escape, so that he is forced to regurgitate

ideas that he has expressed previously without the chance for a new and creative wrestling with the biblical text. That feature felt particularly evident in the reflections on laments (p.53ff) and doxology (p.69ff), which I seem to have read elsewhere in more detail. A book too far, in that it is a work that may be comprehensible for those of us who have travelled down the exploratory paths along which Brueggemann has led over a number of years (and enjoyed the journey!) - but for any new audience it is a book which assumes too much ground, too many givens about the biblical tradition.

Yes, I understand and sympathize with Brueggemann's central thesis in this book, that the Bible, especially when used in preaching, can too easily be flattened or reduced to render it harmless or comfortable. Brueggemann, like John Eaton in his superb conclusion to *Festal Drama in Deutero-Isaiah* wants to present to us a vision of a greater reality, that will transform the restrictive mundanities of our lives. What I want for Brueggemann now is to pause, take time, resist the temptation to produce books such as this which have a somewhat ephemeral feel, and draw on the wealth of his scholarship, imagination and insight to give us the magisterial treatment of scripture as a whole which I would rejoice to see coming from him.

Clare Amos

Robert B. Coote, *Early Israel: A New Horizon*. Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1990.

How did Israel originate? Those who expect to find in this book documentation of the route from Ur of the Chaldees, to Haran, to Canaan, to Egypt, then from Egypt to the Sea, to Sinai, to Canaan will be disappointed. Indeed the three theories of origin put forward by various scholars are rejected in the Introduction: conquering invaders from outside Palestine; various nomadic groups infiltrating the country and merging gradually in a tribal league; Canaanite peasants revolting and taking control. After a fascinating chapter of the 'Everyday Life in Ancient Palestine' variety, in which he tries to locate the 'Israelites' in their proper Palestinian context, Coote presents his own scenario of how Israel came to be: The various rulers of the New Kingdom Period in Egypt (c.1550-1150) made numerous forays into Palestine, setting up garrisons and an administrative system, thus ensuring that there was a firm buffer zone between themselves and 'the foe from the north', in this case, the Hittites. Land and authority were sometimes assigned to local Palestinian strongmen, to reward their loyalty and help retain it. In 1274 Hittites and Egyptians clashed, then made peace with each other. But both groups were pushed aside by a new power originating in Europe and Anatolia, some of whom came to Palestine as the Philistines. They replaced Egyptian authority in Palestine until faced by a

tribal group which was becoming more and more powerful, and which eventually wrested control from the Philistines.

Thus the answer to the question posed at the beginning of the book: 'How did Israel originate?' would seem to be:

Israel was a tribe or tribal group of Palestinians, located in northern Palestine as part of Egypt's buffer against the Hittites, which gradually expanded until it became a force sufficiently strong to challenge the hegemony of the Philistines who had replaced Egypt as the ruling power in Palestine. The famous reference to Israel by Merneptah in 1207, gives us a glimpse of Israel on the way up: 'it reveals Israel as in concept a formidable tribe or tribal alliance, a tribal military force to be reckoned with' (86).

How does all this fit in with the evidence of the Old Testament? For Coote the Hebrew Scriptures began to be formed at the court of King David, whose creative writers set out to portray David, the aggressive opportunist and upstart southern Palestinian warlord, in the best possible light, in order to help win over those who still opposed him. As for the earlier days, especially those periods when these Scriptures state that Israel was not located in Palestine, Coote states: 'The period under discussion ... does not include the periods of the patriarchs, exodus, conquest, or judges, as devised by the writers of the Scriptures. These periods never existed.' (2f). Traditions, of course, must be treated with caution - but can one dispose so easily of the traditions concerning these 'periods'. For example, when discussing the anti-Egyptian emphasis in Exodus Coote notes: 'The southern Judahite pastoral tribal story of flight from Egyptian 'corvee', the exodus, was the tradition adopted by David for flattering his Negeb tribal allies and highlighting his anti-Egyptian stance.' (93f). Is this just a tribal story? There is always the possibility that it had some basis.

But Coote does allow for some close contact between Israel and Egypt. In accounting for the fact that some chiefs and priests of tribal Israel had Egyptian names, he notes that it was policy in the Egyptian New kingdom Period to remove groups of young Palestinians to Egypt to be raised there as hostages and later returned to Palestine as rulers loyal to Egypt. Thus, in spite of his Egyptian name, Moses may have been Palestinian in origin. 'Or he might have had an Egyptian name simply because he was an Egyptian, an ambitious, adventuresome prince or tribal renegade of the Nile'. (90f).

This is a well written, challenging book, making extensive use of the insights gained from modern studies in sociology, archaeology and geography, and a good indicator of current trends in Old Testament studies.

J S McIvor